

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
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CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PEKING 0548

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CH
SUBJ: LO JUI-CHING ARTICLE COMMEMORATES PREMIER CHOU'S BIRTHDAY

1. SUMMARY. LO JUI-CHING, "LEADING MEMBER" OF THE MILITARY COMMISSION, CLOSE ALLY OF TENG HSIAO-PING, AND ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT VICTIMS OF RED GUARD EXCESSES DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, PENNED A LONG ARTICLE FOR THE LIBERATION ARMY DAILY ESTNSIBLY INTENDED TO MARK THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF THE LATE PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI. LO PRAISES CHOU FOR HIS DEMOCRATIC WORK WTYLE, INTEGRITY, COMPASSION, AND DEFENSE OF OLD COLLEAGUES AGAINST UNWARRANTED ATTACK BY THEIR CULTURAL REVOLUTION ADVERSARIES. ALTHOUGH LO PORTRAYS CHOU AS THE DEVOTED, WILLING ASSISTANT TO MAO, HE SUGGESTS -- NONE TOO SUBTLY -- THAT CHOU OUGHT TO BE REGARDED AS THE TRUE HERO OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. PUBLISHED IN CONUNCTION WITH REPORTS ON EXHORTATIONS BY CHAIRMAN HUA AND VICE CHAIRMAN YEH AT THE 5TH NPC TO CONTINUE "TO RAISE HIGH THE BANNER OF MAO TSE-TUNG," THE ARTICLE CAN BE SEEN AS DELIBERATELY PROVOCATIVE. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT ONE OF
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LO'S PURPOSES IS TO HOLD HIGH A DIFFERENT BANNER, THAT OF THE VETERAN CADRES LIKE TENG HSIAO-PING. BUT EITHER BY COINCIDENCE OR DESIGN, CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG AND PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN LI HSIEN-NIEN AND WANG TUNG-HSING SAT IN "AS ORDINARY DELEGATES" ON GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON NPC AGENDA ITEMS, SEEMINGLY EMULATING LO'S CHARACTERIZATION OF CHOU EN-LAI'S STYLE: "WHEREVER HE WENT, HE WOULD GO AMONG THE MASSES. HE DIDN'T LIKE TO TAKE A LOT OF

SECURITY PERSONNEL WITH HIM, OR TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A
RETINUE..." END SUMMARY.

2. LO JUI-CHING, "LEADING MEMBER" OF THE MILITARY COMMISSION,
PENNEA A LONG ARTICLE UNDER HIS OWN NAME TO MARK THE 80TH
BIRTHDAY (ON MARCH 5) OF THE LATE PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI. ONE
OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES COMMEMORATING PREMIER CHOU'S
BIRTHDAY, LO'S PIECE WAS DRAFTED FOR THE LIBERATION ARMY
DAILY AND PRINTED SIMULTANEOUSLY BY ALL PEKING PAPERS ON MARCH 1.
IN CONTENT AND STYLE IT IS MUCH LIKE THE ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN
JANUARY 1977 AND JANUARY 1978 IN CONNECTION WITH THE ANNIVERSARY
OF CHOU'S DEATH. LO AGAIN PRAISES CHOU AS THE "EXEMPLAR OF
THE PARTY'S STYLE OF WORK"; HE LAUDS CHOU FOR HIS DEMOCRATIC
WORK STYLE, HIS INTIMACY WITH THE MASSES, HIS MODESTY, PERSONAL
INTEGRITY, COMPASSION, AND DEFENSE OF OLD COLLEAGUES AGAINST
UNWARRANTED -- AND OFTEN VICIOUS -- ATTACK BY THEIR
CULTURAL REVOLUTION ADVERSARIES.

3. LO'S RECOLLECTION OF ANECDOTES AND HIS PRAISE FOR CHOU
ARE DOUBTLESS GENUINE -- AND EVEN MOVING. BUT LO'S PURPOSES
IN SUBMITTING THE ARTICLE CLEARLY GO BEYOND A DESIRE TO
HONOR THE MEMORY OF AN ESTEEMED FRIEND AND PROTECTOR.

4. LO IS HIMSELF ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT VICTIMS OF
RED GUARD EXCESSES DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION; MENTION OF
HIS NAME IMMEDIATELY EVOKES VISIONS OF BRUTAL TREATMENT AND
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ATTEMPTED SUICIDE BY JUMPING FROM A WINDOW. LEST ANYONE FORGET
THIS BACKGROUND, LO RELATES AN ANECDOTE INVOLVING HIS
UNDERGOING TREATMENT FOR HIS LEG (WHICH HAD BEEN INJURED IN THE
SUICIDE ATTEMPT). MOREOVER, WHILE LO PAYS THE OBLIGATORY LIP
SERVICE TO THE MEMORY OF MAO AND PORTRAYS CHOU AS THE DEVOTED,
WILLING ASSISTANT TO THE LATE CHAIRMAN, HE SUGGESTS -- NONE
TOO SUBTLY -- THAT CHOU OUGHT TO BE REGARDED AS THE TRUE HERO
OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION. ("HE PLAYED A UNIQUE AND CRUCIAL
PART IN BRINGING ABOUT THE VICTORY OF THE GREAT PROLETARIAN
CULTURAL REVOLUTION.")

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PEKING 0548

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5. PUBLISHED IN CONJUNCTION WITH EXCERPTED EXHORTATIONS BY CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG AND VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING AT THE 5TH NPC TO CONTINUE "TO RAISE HIGH THE BANNER OF MAO TSE-TUNG," THE ARTICLE SEEMS TO STRIKE A DELIBERATELY PROVOCATIVE NOTE. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT ONE OF LO'S PURPOSES IS TO HOLD HIGH A DIFFERENT BANNER, THAT OF THE VETERAN CADRES LIKE TENG HSIAO-PING. LO HAS LONG BEEN REGARDED AS ONE OF TENG'S CLOSEST ALLIES AND IS GENERALLY ASSUMED TO SPEAK FOR TENG ON THE MILITARY COMMISSION. LO ALSO NOTES IN PASSING THAT PREMIER CHOU HAD "MADE EVERY EFFORT TO PROTECT" VETERAN CADRE YANG YUNG, ANOTHER TENG ASSOCIATE WHO HAS PERIODICALLY BEEN RUMORED TO BE IN LINE FOR THE PEKING MILITARY REGION COMMAND OR FOR A SENIOR POST IN THE CENTRAL MILITARY HIERARCHY. HIS MENTION OF YANG MIGHT BE INTENDED TO BOOST YANG'S CHANCES FOR ONE OF THESE SLOTS.

6. IN SOME OF THE ARTICLE'S MORE DIDACTIC PASSAGES, LO SEEMS OCCASIONALLY TO BE AIMING BARBS AT HUA KUO-FENG. LO PRAISES CHOU EN-LAI FOR MODESTLY DEMURRING ON PROPOSALS TO BUILD CONFIDENTIAL

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MEMORIAL HALLS IN HIS HONOR OR TO TURN HIS BIRTHPLACE AND FORMER RESIDENCES INTO EXHIBITION CENTERS. HUA, OF COURSE, HAS SEEMED IN RECENT MONTHS TO BE BUILDING A MINI CULT OF PERSONALITY AROUND HIMSELF. IT IS ALSO HUA WHO IS MOST PROMINENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE DECISION TO BUILD A MEMORIAL HALL FOR CHAIRMAN MAO. LO'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ALLEGED MAO-CHOU RELATIONSHIP (CHOU "TRULY SUPPORTED CHAIRMAN MAO, ACTED AS A WILLING ASSISTANT" AND MAO "ALWAYS PLACED UNRESERVED TRUST IN THE PREMIER AND HAD THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR HIM") MAY WELL BE INTENDED AS AN OBLIQUE CRITICISM OF HUA FOR RETAINING BOTH THE PARTY CHAIRMANSHIP AND THE PREMIERSHIP -- WHEN A WILLING

AND LOYAL "ASSISTANT" LIKE TENG IS AVAILABLE.

7. NOTWITHSTANDING LO'S APPARENT INTENT TO BOOST THE IMAGE OF TENG AND OTHER VETERAN CADRES, IT IS HUA KUO-FENG WHO MANAGES TO COME OUT AHEAD IN THIS SKIRMISH. EITHER BY COINCIDENCE OR DESIGN, THERE IS PUBLISHED IMMEDIATELY ABOVE LO'S ARTICLE IN THE PEOPLE'S DAILY A PHOTOGRAPH OF HUA ATTENDING PEKING DELEGATION DISCUSSIONS OF NPC AGENDA ITEMS "IN THE CAPACITY OF AN ORDINARY DELEGATE." THUS HUA APPEARS TO THE READER OF THE PEOPLE'S DAILY AS THE CONTEMPORARY LEADER WHO BEST FITS LO'S CHARACTERIZATION OF CHOU: "WHEREVER HE WENT, HE WOULD GO AMONG THE MASSES. HE DIDN'T LIKE TO TAKE A LOT OF SECURITY PERSONNEL WITH HIM, OR TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A RETINUE..." AND WHILE HUA, ALONG WITH PARTY VICE CHAIRMEN LI HSIEN-NIEN AND WANG TUNG-HSING, WAS MODESTLY MINGLING WITH THE MASSES, TENG HSIAO-PING WAS ELSEWHERE. TENG'S RATHER PECULIAR ABSENCE FROM THE DELEGATE GROUP DISCUSSIONS, LIKE HIS EARLIER UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE FROM COLLECTIVE LABOR BY POLITBURO MEMBERS AT MIYUN RESERVOIR, INEVITABLY RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS RELATIONS WITH HIS STANDING COMMITTEE COLLEAGUES.

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